



**Washington
Senate &
House
Republicans**

OUR COMMITMENT TO WASHINGTON

Home heating assistance. In September, Republicans began pressuring the governor to hold a special session to provide additional home heating assistance for elderly and low-income citizens. The Democrats heard us: The home heating assistance bill was the first one passed in 2006.

State park day-use fee. No sooner had Republicans added "eliminate the day-use fee at state parks" to their Commitment to Washington, than Democrats adopted the idea as their own – despite the fee being implemented as a result of Democrats cutting park funding in their 2002 budget. The bill passed this year.

Sex offenders. Republicans pushed hard this year for sex offender legislation that would meet the level of Jessica's Law. We didn't get there, but we did force Democrats to toughen the bills we considered. As a result, sex offenders who molest children and vulnerable adults will go to prison for 25 years and face tougher post-release registration requirements and supervision.

Breakthroughs on water. Senate and House Republicans, along with a Democrat senator, saw in February that water talks were going nowhere. They gathered a core group of water and environmental stakeholders, put them in a room and worked with them until they had crafted the Columbia River Water Supply Development agreement. Thanks to their persistence, we will finally be able to create new and desperately needed water storage in Eastern Washington.

More help for farmers. In January, Republicans committed to "strengthen the family farm by providing tax relief, preserving open space, and ensuring access to water." We delivered by sponsoring and passing a bill that eases "use it or lose it" policies in the Odessa aquifer region (where the aquifer is drying up). We also introduced bills to provide tax exemptions on farm machinery and fuel. Like the park fee bill, the tax relief bills were authored by Republicans, but Democrats later introduced identical bills, which were passed.

Unemployment insurance solution. Republicans brought Democrat lawmakers and stakeholders to the table to craft a solution that will reduce UI taxes for most employers and stop the shifting of costs among industries.

Keeping our wineries and breweries viable. Republicans helped lead the brokering of a solution to a court ruling that would have forced our state's wineries and breweries out of business.

Early learning. Republicans authored major amendments to a bill creating the Department of Early Learning that made the idea acceptable to parents and lawmakers alike.

Drunk driving penalties. For years, Republicans have tried to make repeat drunk driving a felony. This year, working with public interest groups and aggressively pursuing media coverage of the issue, Republicans got the bill out of the House and toughened it in the Senate. The bill was signed into law.

WASL remediation funding. As part of their commitment, Republicans pushed hard to help more students achieve high standards by winning WASL remediation funding in the budget.

Fighting against meth. In January Republicans committed to make our neighborhoods safer by increasing penalties for methamphetamine production. This year we co-sponsored and won passage of an Attorney General request bill that requires tougher sentencing; enhances authority and support for local law enforcement to inspect and shut down meth labs; and provides funding for treatment for persons addicted to meth.